WE CLAIM:

1. An isolated, attenuated viral strain of human parainfluenza virus 2.

2. The isolated, attenuated viral strain of claim 1 which exhibits titers in plaque assays on Vero cells when grown at around 32 °C in a mammalian host cell which are less than about 100 times its titer when grown around 23 °C in the mammalian host cell, and which is less than or equal to about 100 times its titer when grown at around 39 °C in the mammalian host cell.

3. The isolated, attenuated viral strain of claim 1 which exhibits titers in plaque assays on Vero cells when grown at around 39 °C in the mammalian host cell which are less than or equal to about 1.0 pfu/ml.

4. The isolated, attenuated viral strain of claim 1 which is selected from the group of viral strains consisting of those designated C3396, C3464, C3490, C3457, C3440, C3444, and subclones or progeny of any of the aforementioned strains.

5. The isolated, attenuated viral strain of claim 1 which is selected from the group of viral strains consisting of those designated C3464, C3490, C3440, and subclones or progeny of any of the aforementioned strains.

6. A vaccine composition comprising the isolated, attenuated viral strain of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

7. The vaccine composition of claim 6 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

8. The vaccine composition of claim 6 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant.

9. The vaccine composition of claim 6 wherein the isolated, attenuated viral strain is the strain of claim 2.

10. The vaccine composition of claim 9 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

11. The vaccine composition of claim 9 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant.

12. The vaccine composition of claim 6 wherein the isolated, attenuated viral strain is the strain of claim 4.

13. The vaccine composition of claim 12 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

14. The vaccine composition of claim 12 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant.

15. The vaccine composition of claim 6 wherein the isolated, attenuated viral strain is the strain of claim 5.

16. The vaccine composition of claim 15 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

17. The vaccine composition of claim 15 further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant.

18. A method of inducing a protective immune response in a mammal comprising administering to the mammal an amount of the isolated, attenuated viral strain of claim 1 sufficient to elicit the protective immune response.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the isolated, attenuated viral strain is the strain of claim 2.

20. The method of claim 18 wherein the isolated, attenuated viral strain is the strain of claim 3.

21. The method of claim 18 wherein the isolated, attenuated viral strain is the strain of claim 4.

22. The method of claim 18 wherein the isolated, attenuated viral strain is the strain of claim 5.